

## Policy

VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York is committed to providing an alternate approach to dispute resolution. To help, a few local staff members have been trained to mediate workplace disputes and complaints. Employees are encouraged to use mediation to the greatest extent possible. Mediation will assist in the shared resolution of workplace conflicts in a proper and cost-effective manner at the lowest organizational level.

## Purpose

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) will offer a voluntary early resolution program. ADR will add an additional avenue for mutually resolving conflicts, disputes and complaints. Mediation and group facilitation are two aspects of ADR. The mediation style approach offers an alternate way for mutually resolving conflicts, disputes and complaints. This approach saves time, is less costly and less adversarial than the adjudication or litigation procedures.

Group facilitation is a process similar to mediation that helps groups of employees to come to an understanding of their differences and hopefully to find a common resolution. Facilitators from the ADR team help to guide the process and aid the group in arriving at their own outcome.

## What Is Mediation?

It's an informal way for employees to resolve workplace disputes that may involve fellow employees, managers, supervisors or colleagues. A neutral person called a mediator assists by helping the parties explore ways to resolve their differences. The goal is to reach an agreement that best answers their needs and interests. Mediation is totally voluntary and confidential. This is a process in which the parties must be willing to work out their problems between themselves. The mediator has no power to make decisions for the parties. It is the parties who decide what is important to each other and make decisions on those factors. The mediator will assist the parties to become decision makers by understanding and listening to each other. Concerns will be resolved by working together to create options and solutions.



## How Do I Begin the Process?

Contact one of the ADR Coordinators listed within this brochure or one of the ADR mediators whose names are displayed on local bulletin boards. They will be able to discuss your options with you and provide more information on the mediation process.

A mediator from a VA sister-site may be utilized in this process due to the nature of the issues involved. Each mediation will be handled on an individual basis to ensure confidentiality.

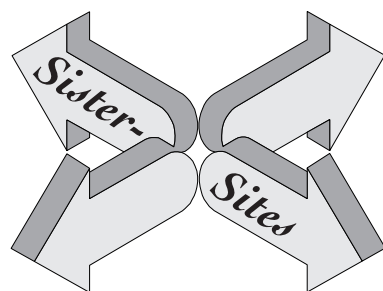
Mediators will try to make arrangements for a location that will provide a neutral area in which participants can discuss their issues.



## Sister-Site Mediations

There may be instances that require a higher level of trust, sensitivity, or confidentiality. In these cases employees may request the services of mediators from other Network Medical Centers. To help in the assignment of mediators from other sites two sets of "Sister Institutions" have been established. These are: 1) Albany and Syracuse; 2) Canandaigua, Bath and Western New York.

Please contact your Local Coordinator as listed in this brochure if you wish to request a mediator from your Sister Institution.



## Local Coordinators

### Albany

Kara Jordan ..... (518) 462-3311  
Ext. 2282

### Bath

Julie Santacrose ..... (607) 664-4528  
Sandy Dolan ..... (607) 664-4523

### Canandaigua

Robin Johnson ..... (716) 393-7759

### Syracuse

David Johnson ..... (315) 476-7461  
Ext. 3561 or 2296

### VA Western New York Health Care System

Sherry Piegza ..... (716) 862- 6556

## Network ADR Coordinator

### Doug Bender

Human Resources Manager (05)  
VA Medical Center  
113 Holland Avenue  
Albany, NY 12208  
(518) 462-3311 Ext. 2879

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# ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION Program



*Providing mediation services  
to assist employees in finding  
solutions to workplace problems*